

Illinois Public Health Association
Maternal and Child Health Section

Reorganizing Illinois' Maternal and Child Health System
Executive Summary

The time has come to reorganize Illinois' Maternal and Child Health system in order to improve the health of all women and children, to strengthen the state's focus on eliminating racial, ethnic and cultural disparities in health status, to ensure that Maternal and Child Health programs remain grounded in public health practice, and to restore Illinois to a position of national leadership in public health and Maternal and Child Health.

The General Assembly should pass legislation to establish a new office within IDPH to house Illinois' Maternal and Child Health system and specify the qualifications of the person who will lead it.

- 1) This new office must include:
 - The Division of Health Promotion within IDPH and
 - The former Division of Community Health and Prevention from the Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS).
2. The position must be classified as a Deputy Director (reporting directly to the Director of Public Health) and the incumbent must:
 - hold a doctoral degree in one of the health sciences;
 - hold at least a master's degree in public health, and
 - have several years of demonstrated leadership experience in public-sector Maternal and Child Health programs.

This reorganization has the following benefits

1. Eliminate Fragmentation
2. Align State-level Program Structure with Accepted Practice.
3. Increase Focus on Reducing Health Disparities
4. Improve Performance
5. Afford Maternal and Child Health Program Managers Better Access to Data
6. Provide Strong, State-Level Maternal and Child Health Leadership.
7. Build a Strong State Health Department
8. Strengthen the Local Public Health System.
9. Better Prepare for Health Care Reform
10. Improve the Public Health System's Position for National Accreditation
11. Focus on Public Health - Not Just Poverty Reduction
12. Strengthen and Integrate Maternal and Child Health with Adult Health Programs

Contact the IPHA office at (217) 522-5687 or visit www.ipha.com for a copy of the full proposal.